

# **UMass & Town of Amherst Party Registration Pilot Program**

**July 2016**

## **Purpose**

Party Registration gives hosts of social gatherings an opportunity to receive a warning and time to voluntarily disband a party after the Amherst Police Department (APD) receives a noise complaint. Party Registration is designed to reduce noise disturbance in neighborhoods, particularly those in close proximity to the University of Massachusetts (UMass). Party Registration provides an opportunity to educate hosts about responsible and safe party behavior and also uses an incentive-based approach to reduce the need for police interventions for noise disturbances. This program is proposed as a pilot that may be changed or expanded after its initial trial period.

## **Party Registration Rules**

### **Applicability:**

1. Registrants must be enrolled UMass students living off-campus in Amherst and provide a current UMass Student ID and proof that they are over the age of 18.
2. Registered parties are valid only on the specific date and address listed on the Registration Form.
3. Only parties occurring on Fridays and Saturdays are eligible for Party Registration.
4. UMass Sororities, Fraternities and other Recognized Student Organizations are not eligible to register events under Party Registration.
5. Parties at residence halls and in public spaces such as public streets, parks, conservation areas and in apartment complex open spaces are not eligible for Party Registration.

### **Registration and Warning Process:**

6. UMass students may apply for registration in person by Thursday at 4 p.m. at the Off Campus Student Center, Student Union Rm. 314. Application information, including name, address and phone number, will be provided to the APD Communication Center to document registered parties.
  - The Registrant is responsible for knowing lease requirements with regard to gatherings, such as giving advance notice to landlords, or limiting number of people in your unit at any one time. Registrants may put their tenancy at risk by violating lease requirements. Read your lease!

- Outdoor amplified music is strongly discouraged. It is disruptive to the community and draws unwanted crowds.
7. Registrants must be on the property at all times to shut down the party if a warning is received. If APD responds to the property, the Registrant must meet APD at the door.
  8. Rather than dispatch a police officer to the property, APD will contact the Registrant by phone if a noise complaint is received. Registrants must be available to answer their phone at all times; if there is no answer, APD will leave a voicemail. The twenty minute warning period begins when APD calls the Registrant -- not hearing the phone, having a full voicemail box or dead cell battery are not excuses. The party must be shut down within 20 minutes of the warning from APD.
  9. Shutting down the party means that all guests must leave immediately, peacefully and quietly to avoid further disruptions or complaints. Help deter unsafe driving by guiding your guests to the bus, taxi or other responsible ride options.
  10. Criminal or Municipal violations other than noise will result in a police officer being dispatched to the registered address without a warning period. Such violations may include nuisance gatherings, fighting, public urination, yelling and screaming in streets or yards, providing alcohol to minors, and violations of the open container of alcohol bylaw.
  11. If a second noise complaint occurs after the 20 minute warning period, a police officer will be dispatched.
  12. If a citation is issued related to a registered party, no parties may be registered at that address for the remainder of the semester.

**It's OK to Ask for Help:**

13. If you're uncomfortable with the size of your party, it's unsafe, or people will not leave despite your requests, call the APD non-emergency number, **[insert number]**, and ask for help to shut down your party before things get out of control.

**Private Security:**

14. Private security guards employed by your landlord protect the property and deserve courtesy. Depending upon the terms in your lease, private security may ask you to break up your party even though no noise complaint is received by APD.

## **Limitations**

Party Registration does not provide immunity from relevant laws and the Registrant understands that the police may respond at any time to a property where there is a complaint of criminal conduct. The Party Registration Program does not prohibit or limit in any manner the authority of the police to respond to a party for any reason without previously providing a warning. The Amherst Police Department will use reasonable efforts to contact the Registrant and provide a warning when appropriate. However, the Registrant acknowledges that a warning is not guaranteed under this program. Furthermore, only one warning and termination/shut down of a party is available to an address per party registration. Registrants who host parties which have noise violations subsequent to termination of a registered party will not receive the benefit of a warning and are subject to enforcement.

The Town of Amherst and UMass neither condone nor sponsor any party which has been registered with the Party Registration Program. Participation in the Party Registration Program does not constitute approval by the Town or UMass of any such party or related activities.

The Town and UMass are not liable for the conduct or actions of any guests, hosts, or individuals associated with a party registered with the Party Registration Program. Participation in the Party Registration Program does not guarantee that the host(s) or attendees of the registered party will be relieved of any legal consequences arising from any conduct or actions associated with the party.

The Town and UMass shall not be liable for damages to property or injuries to or death of any person or persons arising from a party which has been registered with the Party Registration program. Nor shall the Town or UMass be liable for damages to property or injuries to or death of any person or persons following a party which has been shut down pursuant to this program. Participation in Party Registration is voluntary and creates no contractual rights.

The Registrant is responsible for compliance with federal, state and local laws, including but not limited to paying any fines or fulfilling any legal obligations. Party Registration program materials should never be used as a substitute for individualized counseling or legal advice from a qualified professional. Information contained in Party Registration program materials does not constitute legal advice. Laws and ordinances discussed may change or be amended due to subsequent court decisions, legislation or bylaws.

**Proposal for Amherst Party Registration Pilot Program**  
**Campus Community Coalition**  
**Municipal Strategies Subcommittee**  
**July 2016**

The Campus Community Coalition (CCC) was formed in 2004 to reduce high-risk drinking. The Town of Amherst, the University of Massachusetts and many community stakeholders have actively participated in the CCC. In 2015, with reorganized subcommittees, the Municipal Strategies Subcommittee was formed and co-chaired by Captain Jennifer Gundersen, Amherst Police Department and Connie Kruger, Amherst Select Board. The initiative the Municipal Strategies Subcommittee is currently focusing on is the establishment of a Party Registration Program, modeled after best practices already demonstrated by other college communities around the country. Fort Collins, Colorado, in particular, has been helpful in sharing information from their successful program.

What is Party Registration?

The Party Registration program gives party hosts an opportunity to receive a warning and time to voluntarily disband a party after a noise complaint has been received. Party Registration is designed to reduce noise disturbance in neighborhoods, mostly those neighborhoods in close proximity to the University of Massachusetts. The program provides an opportunity to educate college students about responsible and safe party behavior and also uses an incentive based approach to reduce the need for police interventions for noise disturbances.

Who will administer the program?

This pilot program will be a partnership between the Town of Amherst and the University of Massachusetts, primarily through its Off Campus Student Center.

When will the program be implemented?

The pilot program will be in effect during the fall semester, 2016. During the pilot program only UMASS students will be eligible to participate. The outcomes of the pilot program will be evaluated in January 2017 and changes to the program will be considered at that time.

How will the program operate?

Registration would occur at the Off Campus Student Center at UMASS. Parties will be eligible for registration for Friday and Saturday night only. A party will need to be registered by Thursday at 4:00 PM for that coming weekend. At the time of registration peer-based education will be provided, with appropriate messaging to registrants about campus and community concerns and "smart party" guidelines will be promoted. By 12 p.m. Friday the Off Campus Student Center will email the Amherst Police Department Communication Center a list of registrants names, address and primary and secondary cell phone number. By 4 p.m. the Amherst Police Communication Center would enter "Registered

Party,” for all applicable registered parties for the weekend.

Calls for a noise complaint of a registered party would require the following by the Amherst Communication Center:

1. Confirm that the noise is for a loud party, and not for a fight or other non-noise disturbance.
2. Start a call for “Noise” with a call action of “Warned/Registered.”
3. Notify the caller that the party is registered and that the hosts will be contacted and told to shut their party down within 20 minutes.
4. The call will be assigned to the Station Officer, who will call the primary and if necessary the secondary number of the party registrants and notify them that they have 20 minutes to quell the noise and require their guests to vacate. Unless the registrant reports the need for police assistance, police officers will not be dispatched.
5. If another complaint is received after the 20 minute warning, officers will be dispatched and have discretion if a violation is observed for a noise disturbance, and as to whether to issue a warning, citation, summons or arrest.
6. Occupants at an address who receive a complaint for noise, who are unsuccessful in quelling the noise and a police response is required, will not be allowed access to the party registration process after a specified period of time yet to be determined.